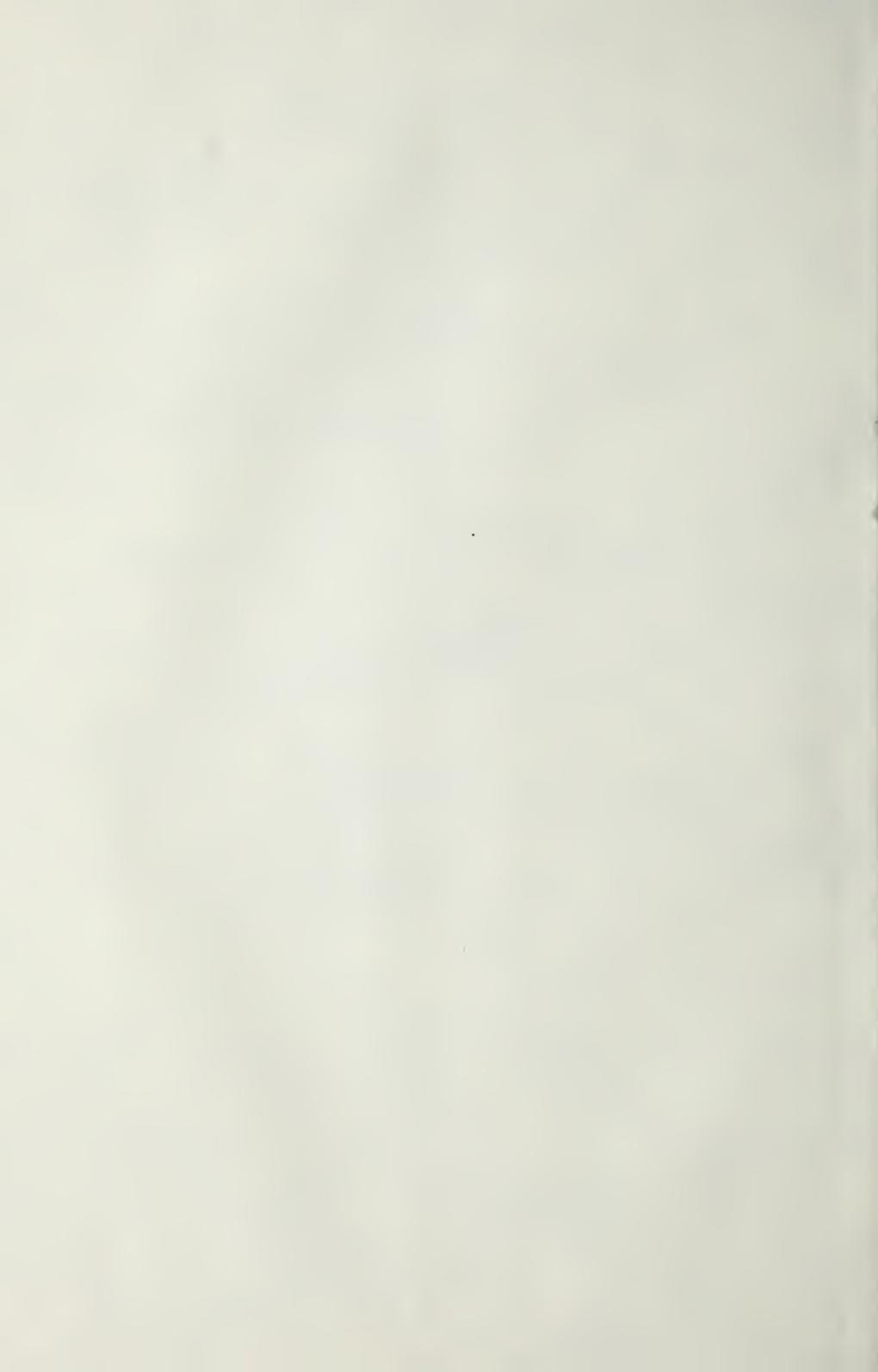




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# HISTORY

OF THE

Reformed Church, Shippensburg, Pa.

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## A HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

PREACHED BY THE PASTOR,

REV. D. W. EBBERT,

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1877.

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PUBLISHED BY THE CONGREGATION.

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Rev. C. S. May  
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# HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

*"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."*—Psalm 137: 5-6.

The Jewish people had been taken captive, and were held in bondage in Babylon. Here, amidst the taunts and jeers of their conquerors, they were required to sing a song even as they sang while they were free from bondage. In the midst of these jeers they sang the words of the text, thus showing the Babylonians that though in a strange land they would never forget the church of their fathers.

The long Past is continually borne along by the pious mind, because it seeks to sanctify and appropriate to its high and lasting purposes, those things with which it associates. The Pagans held in high esteem their antiquities. That which concerned their religion was the most securely treasured and preserved in their traditions; “these glimmer ‘farthest back in the morning twilight of their annals.’” Their temples and sacred altars are traditionally treasured, whilst the capitols and pageantry of state have passed away.

Amongst the Jews there was a great reverence for the past. They refer us to the days of old, the sayings of old, the works of old, and the years of ancient times. The places where God revealed himself to them in dreams or visions were sacred spots to them afterwards. The nation builds its magnificent temple where the patriarchs erected their altars and where the tribes located the taber-

nacle. “Their altars are known to them as the altars of their fathers, their worship as the covenant of their fathers, their laws as the statutes of their fathers, and their God as the God of their fathers.”

If it be pleasant for the Jewish people to revere the past and hold it in sacred remembrance; so also, my friends, it is congenial to us to cherish old associations, and we shall attempt, this day, to call to mind the trials which your fathers sustained in establishing the Reformed Church in our midst. Shall we not remember those loved ones, whose church property we inherit, and which was gathered by their pains? Shall we worship in this church which they founded, surrounded by their solemn and silent graves, where their ashes rest, without recounting their struggles, doing honor to their memory, and awakening our hearts to be grateful to God, who has caused us to become the happy heirs of such an inheritance? Yea,

“Let children hear the mighty deeds,  
Which God performed of old,  
Which in our younger years we saw,  
And which our fathers told.”

It is, indeed, befitting us to note briefly the causes which impelled those who first came to America as the founders of the Reformed Church, to leave the land of their birth and to immigrate to the wilderness of the New World.

Our Reformed faith is not one that is founded on the shifting present, but rests in the past, and possesses for us peculiar charms. But it is not in pride, but in gratitude that we state we are descended from a holy

company of martyrs, each of whom firmly believed "*That I with body and soul both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins.*"

The Reformed Church was established in the New World by citizens from Switzerland, the Palatinate, and France, who, because of their religious belief, were banished from their homes by their enemies. When the Edict of Nantes passed in 1598, which granted full religious toleration to the Reformed Church for near a century, was revoked by Louis XIV., in 1685, a series of persecutions were commenced in France too horrible to recount. The Reformed, called Huguenots, were the only Protestants in France at this time, hence the Reformed Church became the bush in which the adherents of the Pope kindled the fires of persecution, because the believers in her glorious faith would not bow down and acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. Hence Bartholomew's eve tells a sad story. "There is a religion which can chant the *Te Deum* after it has washed its hands in the blood of a hundred thousand Huguenots, as at the 'Bloody Marriage' of Bartholomew's night; but that religion is not the Reformed religion."

The Palatinate along the Rhine presents similar scenes of horror. After the death of Charles, the last of the Reformed princes, in 1685, the Reformed were hunted down by their enemies, and by them compelled to seek a covert from the storms of persecution. Because the Heidelberg Catechism in answer to the 80th Question, declares that the Romish mass was "an accursed idolatry," it, too, was harassed on every hand.

Switzerland, "the land of mountains

and solid souls," fared no better than France and the Palatinate. Here dread armies stood opposed in deadly combat, the one shouting "God is with us," the other answering, "Jesus—Mary."

From such scenes of horror, no wonder the Reformed turned away and exclaimed with the Psalmist, "O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest." But God has witnessed their trials and heroic faith. He will lead them as he did the children of Israel, into a Canaan. As He directed Joseph's flight from Bethlehem to avoid Herod, so He will by His providence lead the Reformed from persecution into a godly land where no hierarchy can stand as mediator between God and their consciences. Our fathers came to America, not to seek gold or silver, houses or lands, (for they left all these) but to seek a peaceful home where they could enjoy freedom of conscience and religious liberty.

Previous to 1700, the first Reformed, about six thousand in number, came to America and settled at Schoharie, in the Province of New York; but in 1722 many of them came to Pennsylvania by crossing over through the wilderness to the head waters of the Susquehanna. They floated down this stream in rude canoes and arrived at the mouth of the Swatara, whence they sought the beautiful valley along the Tulpehocken creek. Here they sang their grand old soul-stirring German songs giving glory to God, even in a strange land. And I can imagine that the Indian stood in his wigwam door, charmed by their sweet, glad notes of thanksgiving to God, and wondered if these notes were not the sweet echoes of the songs sang in his long desired celestial hunting grounds.

Those songs spread their influence in quick succession, until soon an echo was given back as an evidence that our fathers in this beautiful valley of the Cumberland, who now lie in the old church yard, had caught the sound and were joyfully assisting to swell the grand chorus to the skies.

Thus we see that those who came to America as ministers and members of the Reformed Church, were tried persons, and persons, too, whose veins were full of patriotic blood, and the pulsations of whose hearts were lightened when they could freely sing their hymns and devoutly offer their prayers in a land free from the polluting hands of the Romanists.

It is very probable that those who were the founders of the Reformed Church in Shippensburg, immigrated thither for the sake of principle.

In tracing the *History* of the Reformed Church here, we have had many obstacles to surmount, how well we have accomplished the task, the sequel will show. The *Record* which we have, and which was used by the Reformed and Lutheran congregations jointly for a number of years—till about 1800—has on the first page the following written in German:

“*Baptism Book* for the church in Shippensburg. This Book was bought for 5£, 12s. 6d.—\$27.22½, on 13th of June, 1775.” But no mention of a minister is given till the name of Rev. John Christopher Faber appears in the year 1786. For the information which I obtained concerning the different pastors previous to 1786, I am indebted to a valuable work entitled “*Fathers of the Reformed Church,*” by Rev. H. Harbaugh, D. D.

In as much as the *joint agreement* between the Reformed and Lutheran congregations, adopted Sep. 9, 1778, implies the separate existence of both

these congregations before the period when the agreement was adopted, we began the search, convinced that the Reformed Church of Shippensburg must have been organized previous to 1775, when the Baptisnal Record was purchased.

#### REV. THEO. FRAKENFELD, 1753-1755.

The first minister that preached here was Rev. Theodore Frankenfeld, whose pastorate began in 1753 and closed 1755, at which time the church was a mission, supplied by the church at Frederick, Md.

About the period when this community was considerably agitated over the massacre of a teacher and his pupils not many miles distant from this place by hostile Indians, Mr. Frankenfeld traveled through the valley preaching the good news of the Gospel, which, no doubt, served to soothe the minds of those who were horror stricken in the neighborhood, because of the atrocity of the Indians.

Rev. Frankenfeld was born in Western Germany, and educated in his native land. “He was one of the six young men who responded to the appeal made by Rev. Michael Schlatter, in 1781-2, in person, to the churches of the Palatinate, for laborers to supply the many vacancies in the New World.” These six, Frankenfeld, Otterbein, Stoy, Waldschmid, Rubel and Wissler, were examined and ordained at the Hague, by the deputies of the Synod of Holland. After which they sailed for America, arriving at New York July 27, 1752. Mr. Frankeufeld became the first regular pastor of the Reformed Church at Frederick, Md.

When Mr. Schlatter came with him to this place for the purpose of installing him pastor, on the 4th of May, 1753, he wrote: “It was proposed by Mr. Schlatter, that it would be necessary for me, with this congregation,

to take charge of the congregations of Conowago and Conogocheague, under the promise that should another minister come into the country, he shall be located on this side of the Susquehanna, and that the Conowago congregation shall then be taken off my hands." Now inasmuch as the region described as Conogocheague answers to the region in which Shippensburg and Chambersburg are now located, we infer, then, that Mr. Frankenfeld was the first pastor of the church here. And that Mr. Frankenfeld preached here is also probable in as much as Shippensburg, as it was "allied then, was the earliest settlement in the valley, and he would hardly pass this prominent settlement, in his travels. He did not live very long after having taken charge of this extensive field of labor. His name does not appear on the Cœtal minutes after 1772. It is probable that he died between 1756-7. He was a very earnest and active worker in the Lord's vineyard.

It was Michael Schlatter who suggested as early as 1747, the propriety of establishing a branch Synod, called *Cœtus*, for the transaction of business and the transmission of reports to the Synods of Holland. In obedience to a call issued by Schlatter, 31 persons, ministers and elders, assembled in the Reformed Church of Philadelphia, Sept. 29th, 1747, when Rev. J. Rieger opened the *Cœtus* with a discourse based on the 133d Psalm. In 1792 the term *Synod* was applied to the body formerly known as *Cœtus*.

#### REV. JNO. CONRÄD BÜCHER, 1764—1768.

Rev. Bucher was a Swiss by birth. His father, Jacob Bucher, was Sheriff of the district Neukirch, in the Canton of Schäffhausen, and resided in the town of Neukirch. His father was a man of means and influence, and accordingly his son received a good education. Rev. Bucher had an

active mind and was given to application, so that he took the highest honors in the schools which he attended. In his youth it was intended that he should prepare for the ministry, but when he grew to manhood he was more inclined towards military life. At the opening of the Indian war, the English concluded that it was policy to secure German officers for the German troops. In response to a call for German officers, Mr. Bucher came to America about 1755, and located at or near Carlisle, Pa., which was then a frontier settlement where Fort Louther had been erected. He was first a Lieutenant, afterwards promoted Adjutant of Second Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment. Afterwards he was Captain. He turned his attention to the ministry again, about 1762. Though he was still a military officer, yet he was not in the active service. From the year 1764 to 1768 his field of labor included the following: Carlisle, Shippensburg, (Shippensburg) Bedford, Fort Pitt, Sharpsboro', Coxtown Big Crossings of the Yoghogeny, Redstone, Lebanon, Quitopahilla, Hummelstown, Middletown, Buffalo, Jonestown, Klopp's, Chamberlain's, Falling Springs, Dr. Schebley's, Conococheague, Hagerstown, Peter Spangs, Sharpsburg, Heidelberg, Schaefferstown, Weischenland, Maytown, Manhiem, Rapho Blassers. He moved to Lebanon in 1768. He was certainly very active, as the above conclusively shows. He was greatly respected by all his people. On the morning of August 15th, 1780, he went from Lebanon to Millers-town, (Annville now), to solemnize a marriage. In the midst of this joyous occasion, he suddenly died. At first some proposed to haul him home to Lebanon, but out of respect for him,

"devout men," bore him on a bier upon their shoulders a distance of five miles to his home. In the graveyard of the First Reformed Church, his remains were interred.

**REV. JACOB WEYMER, 1770-76.**

Mr. Weymer was a native of Germany, and came to America at an early day. In 1770 he was a regular member of Coetus, and pastor of several congregations in East Pennsylvania. In the Cœtal minutes of 1770, it is stated he was called to Conogochague, "which is described as lying in Maryland, about eighty miles from Baltimore." His residence was at Hagerstown, then called Elizabethtown. There seems to have been difficulties in the churches of the valley, as Coetus appointed Revs. Gross and Gebracht, to restore order and peace. They succeeded and Mr. Weymer accepted the call and became pastor in 1770. In the old Church Record referred to before, I find that John Kaufman was baptised Oct. 13th, 1770, and that on March 25th, 1771, John Henry, son of John Benj. Kuhn and his wife Maria Barbara, was baptised. The sponsors were Henry Decker and Anna M. Brumbauch. Perhaps these entries were made as the labors of Mr. Weymer; but it is not conclusively known. Mr. Weymer organized the congregation at Chambersburg in 1774 or 1775, at which time the corner stone of the stone church at Hagerstown was laid. "He was a good man, an excellent preacher, plain and practical, beloved by every person within and without the congregation. He would require his catechumens to commit the answer and would then pace the aisle in front of the pulpit while explaining it." The Cœtal minutes of 1790, make mention of the death of Mr. Weymer, "a short time previous, had finished

his earthly course, and entered into his blessed rest." He was buried at Hagerstown, Md., but no one knows where. "*Sic transit gloria mundi!*"

**REV. JOHN WM. RUNKLE, 1776—1781.**

Mr. Runkle was born in Oberengelheim, in the Palatinate, April 28, 1749. His early youth was spent in the mother country. When he was about fifteen years of age his father came to America. They arrived in Philadelphia, Oct. 1, 1764. Being piously disposed, and as he was well instructed by his parents he turned his attention to the study of Theology about 1774. He is said to have been endowed with good talents, "and combining zeal with great industry, he was soon prepared as a religious teacher, and his services were anxiously sought." From the Cœtal minutes of 1777, the following is taken, by Dr. Harbaugh, which we here quote :

"The congregations in Shippensburg, Carlisle, Lower Settlement, Hummelstown, made application for the examination and ordination of one named Runkle, in order that he might become their pastor;

WHEREAS, Mr. Runkle has already received instruction for several years from different ministers, has also manifested his zeal in the Holy service, and has, moreover, a good testimony, as well from ministers as from the congregations who desire him as their pastor, and since these congregations are located very far from us, so that they can be but seldom visited, it was

*Resolved*, That Mr. Runkle be examined, and, if he renders satisfaction, in this respect, he shall be sent to these congregations as catechist."

His examination proved satisfactory, and he was sent to this charge for a year. But we learn from his journal that he preached in Shippensburg while yet a Theological student. He was ordained July 30th, 1778, in Carlisle, by Revs. Dr. Hendel and Daniel Wagner. His life

was a very active one. Very few accomplish as much as he did. "During the year 1777 his field of labor extended over Cumberland, and part of York counties, the lower part of Dauphin, the greater part of Lebanon, and all of Lancaster, north of the city." He visited regularly once each month, the vacant churches in this extensive territory. During the year 1777 alone, he preached two hundred sermons and traveled fifteen hundred miles. In addition, he visited the sick and attended to the religious instruction of the young. During his pastorate the Log church was erected, and the following *Articles of Agreement* were drawn up and signed by members of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations. You will note that your fathers knew how to prepare church agreements. I have with me the original document with the original signatures of the signers. The document is in German, but I will read you a translation, which will be interesting to all of you.

"An Agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran, and (since 1869 the term German has been dropped. The church is now known as the 'Reformed Church in the United States;') German Reformed congregations of Shippensburg, Pa., Sept. 9, 1778.

The conditions between both are as follows:

*First*—Both congregations shall take care to have a suitable minister, and he shall be chosen from the Reverend Ministerium, or shall, at least, be recommended by one or more members of the church. And no other minister shall preach besides the one elected. The majority shall elect the pastor.

*Second*—From both congregations three elders and three deacons shall be elected for two years, and these six shall constitute a church council. And this council shall keep in repair the church building, have a care for

it and the grave-yard, and render a statement annually to the congregations. Both ministers may vote with the church council, if they desire. In case one minister is absent and the other present, the officers of the congregation whose pastor is absent may choose one of their number to vote in his stead. In case of a tie then lots shall be cast to determine the result. If a member of the council is not present, those present shall select some one to act in his place for that time, and proceed with the election. And the absent member shall give an account of his absence to the council. And if this member's excuse is that he does not care for the church, then he shall lose all his rights as a member of the congregation.

The spiritual welfare of the people shall be watched over by the pastor and consistory of each congregation.

*Third*—Both congregations shall contribute equally towards the church incidentals. When the church building needs repairing, the matter shall be acted upon by the council, and decided by vote of the council present. After the repairs have been completed and one of the congregations does not pay its half of the expense within a year, if called for, then shall the amount be collected by law. But if not called for within a year after the completion of the repairs, before determined by the council, then the claim is forfeited forever. If either of the congregations is brought before the courts of law five times, it shall lose its right to the church property.

If any members from stinginess, stubbornness or enmity, leave the council in a dilemma, such members shall be excluded from the communion of each congregation. If this condition of affairs become common to both congregations, then the council may sell the church property, if they wish, to pay the indebtedness. If any one is excluded from the church, or leaves of his own free-will, such a one cannot receive anything he formerly contributed.

*Fourth*—If at any time one of the congregations wishes to build a church of their own, the standing church shall be valued by uninterested carpenters, and the half of this shall be

paid to the congregation desiring to build.

*Fifth*—If any one scolds or quarrels in or near the church, that one shall pay six pounds—about \$30.00—currency to the contribution money of his respective congregation.

*Sixth*—These articles shall remain unchanged until they are amended by a majority of votes. Each one shall accept the above by voice and affix his signature, and also the church and presented lot—the lot to which we refer lies on Queen Street, Shippensburg."

SIG NED:

Peter Stambach,  
Conrad Bochner,  
Conrad Fishburn,  
George Steigeler,  
Lawrence Stambach,  
Radolph Frey,  
Ludwig Long,  
Benjamin Cong.,  
Chas'r Muellhisen,  
Leonard Bublinger,  
Jacob Helm,  
Michael Trexler,  
Jacob Witmer,  
Christain Erdinger,  
Frederick Dellinger,

John Schneider,  
Jno. Nicholas Ebert,  
John Jacob Helm,  
John Kuehner,  
George Spiehler,  
Conrad Keinadt,  
Christian Mueller,  
Michael Mueller,  
Michael Minck,  
John Adamhton,  
Casper Lay,  
John Keunauer,  
Christian Borinner,  
Jacob Mueller,"

It is indeed true that the church in which your fathers worshiped was not fitted up with conveniences like those of modern times. But when they had even a log church with its quaint pulpit, they were happy, as this was far more preferable than the forest or barn. Neither was it customary in those early days to heat churches, still, their prayers were as acceptable to God as those offered up in the most elegant churches of to-day.

In the year 1781, Mr. Runkel received and accepted a call to Lebanon. He kept a regular journal of his labors for each year. He died in Gettysburg, November 1832, having attained to the ripe age of 83 years. His remains lie interred by the side of his wife, in the grave-yard in Emmitsburg, where a tombstone marks his grave.

REV. JOHN CHRISTOPHER FABER, 1781—  
1786.

Of Mr. Faber's life we know but lit-

tle. He came to this country previous to 1773, and preached first at Baltimore, Md. Application was made to Cœtus in 1774 for his reception as a member of that body. He was received by Cœtus. He has made no note of his labors in Shippensburg; but his successor, Spangenberg, mentions him as his (S's) predecessor. After 1786, he continued to preach at Chambersburg until 1789. "As a preacher he was respectable, but not above mediocrity." When and where he died I know not. The facts of his decease I could not ascertain. But God knows, and we shall be content.

REV. CYRIACUS SPANGENBERG, VON REIDEMEISTER, 1786—1788.

Before the life and character of Spangenberg are described, we will give an account of his labors here which we glean from the Record. He came to Shippensburg Nov. 1786. The consistory that sent him the call consisted of Elders John Lohr and John Hohn; deacons John Peeck and Jno. Seyler. The Lutheran minister contemporary with him was the Rev. John George Butler.

There seems to have been serious divisions amidst this flock at this time. Because of this trouble the united consistories of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations assembled Jan. 1st, 1788, to adjust the difficulty. They drew up the following preamble and resolutions:

"WHEREAS, The consistory of each congregation, beholding the many vulgar sins and gross offences with abhorrence, deem it their duty that such may be removed and that an orderly congregation be formed out of the fold, to adopt the following:

"In the name of the Holy Trinity. Amen.

"As the undersigned called by God as preachers, elders, and deacons of the united christian denominations—Lutheran and German Reformed—in

Shippensburg, have met as God has commanded in 1st Cor 14:40, and as we will place ourselves under severe reproof before God if we keep silent to the current offences; therefore, we have, of this date according to the power we have of God and the congregations, unanimously resolved as follows:

"WHEREAS, Alas, as there are amongst us certain God-forgotten heathen families, who either seldom or not at all come to God's House, and thereby give to their faithful pastors and church council vexation, and offence to the congregations, therefore,

"Resolved. That at the command of the church council, these disgraceful scorners of the religious service shall be visited by their pastors and warned, and if they do not heed this warning, then shall their names and sins be publicly made known from the pulpit.

"Resolved, As there are those who neither contribute to the support of the Gospel or the maintenance of the School, so shall the ministers be forbidden to administer the communion and baptism to them and their families, until they too in love are willing to bear the burden with their brethren.

"These resolutions shall be read to the congregation two weeks before action is taken, so that all to whom they may concern, may beware and begin anew a christian life.

#### LUTHERAN:

Rev. John G. Butler, Pastor; John A. Graim, Elder; John Deatrich, Elder; Melchior Fich, Deacon; Christian Wehr, Deacon.

#### REFORMED:

Cyriacus Spangenberg, v. Reidmeister, Pastor; John Lohr, Elder; John Hohn, Elder; John Peeck, Deacon; John Seyler, Deacon.

It is stated in the *Record* that the difficulties were amicably settled; but my opinion is that there was reason for the people to refuse to follow Spangenberg as pastor, as what follows will conclusively prove. Spangenberg baptised 34, and confirmed 32. There were 53 communicants present

at his first communion held May 27, 1787. At his second communion there were present 43, and at his third and last, 38. He received a call to the Reformed Church at Bedford, he states, and preached his farewell sermon June 22, 1788, from 1 John, 2-24.

We have now given you a condensed account of the labors of Spangenberg, of infamous memory, at Shippensburg. I wish I could give you a good report of him afterward, and that he had been followed to his grave by sympathizing friends, and that his loss had been sorely felt. "It required one of the angels of light to make a devil. It was one who ranked with the apostles that became the son of perdition." So Spangenberg was a wolf in sheep's clothing. It is indeed true that if one desires to further the devil's work, he need but enter the ranks of the holy ministry and at the very altar of God make obeisance to the Champion of perdition. There have been in all ages of the Church wolves

"In the clothing of the gentle lamb!  
Dark traitors in Messiah's holy camp!  
Lepers in saintly garb!"

In that day it was easy, indeed, for impostors to force themselves upon those residing in the rural districts of Pennsylvania, because there were many vacant charges and the people were hungering after spiritual bread.

Spangenberg's early life is veiled. We know nothing of his parentage. He came to this country as a British mercenary—called Hessian—in 1776. In the minutes of Coetus, dated May 14, 1783, is the following: "A man by the name of Spangenberg, of Reidemester, uncle of Rev. Mr. Dibben-dorf, presented himself before Coetus to be admitted into the ranks of the ministry." But for reasons he was refused. In the following year he again appeared before Coetus, and was

again refused. Coetus then wrote to the Synod of Holland for advice. But before a reply was received, Spangenberg got a frivolous, independent preacher by the name of Michaels, to ordain him; thus not by the "door," but by "climbing up some other way" did this wolf get into the sheep-fold. He went to Shamokin where his sins found him out. Then he came to Shippensburg, where no doubt he was compelled to leave during the second year of his pastorate. From Shippensburg, he went to Bedford, where he soon ended his miserable existence on the gallows. Justice and judgment were already brandishing their swords, as his cup of iniquity would soon be filled. At the Bedford charge the good soon forsook Spangenberg and assembled in the church at Berlin, to advise a change of pastors. Jacob Glessner, a grand-uncle of Rev. G. W. Glessner, of Newburg, Pa., was seated with Spangenberg immediately in front of the pulpit. Mr. Glessner was a pious elder and highly respected. He advised a change of pastors, whereupon the wretched Spangenberg, drew a dirk and stabbed him in the heart. Soon the elder lay in death. Spangenberg was tried and condemned, and was hung in Bedford county, on Saturday, Oct. 10, 1795, between the hours of ten and two o'clock. Thus the wicked career of Spangenberg ended. But let no one think that the Reformed Church is the only one that has these wretched emissaries of Satan. The trouble is there are too many in all churches. The moral is this—*never permit an irregular or independent preacher to officiate in your church. If he does not stand in connexion with a properly constituted ecclesiastical body, he is unworthy of confidence.*

#### REV. JOHN PHILIP STOCK, 1790-1800.

There was an interval of four years during which this charge was vacant,

when Mr. Stock, from Duisberry, Germany, became pastor. At first he resided in Chambersburg, but preached at Shippensburg at the same time. His name occurs but once in the Record, and then under the date of 1797. He resided for some time in Shippensburg, as Rev. Samuel Helfenstein, D. D., pursued his theological studies under him whilst residing here. He administered the Lord's Supper on May 10, 1797, to 52 communicants. After the year 1800 we know nothing of Mr. Stock. I visited an aged couple, Mr. and Mrs. Walters, aged respectively, 80 and 77 years, who were baptised by Mr. Stock. They describe him as being an elderly man in the year 1800 already. He was an earnest preacher and highly respected by all. The Rev. Mr. Stock, of the Evangelical Association Church, is a grand-son of his. The latter part of his life and especially his decease, is not known.

#### REV. JAMES HOFFMAN, 1807—1823.

Before Mr. Hoffman became pastor the charge was vacant for a period of six years. Father Hoffman labored successfully for a number of years at this place and other points. With him we begin to trace the history of the church which is familiar with the oldest of you. Mr. Hoffman was ordained in 1796 to the gospel ministry, at Philadelphia, and was called to Chambersburg in 1807. Chambersburg and Shippensburg were presided over by him till 1818, when he ceased preaching at Chambersburg and confined his labors to the Shippensburg charge, consisting of Shippensburg, Solomon Sherer's, Campbelstown and Strasburg, as late as 1823. You, no doubt, will call to mind Pastor Hoffman's venerable appearance, his snow-white locks, his earnest and impressive address, his truly pious

walk and conversation. His preaching talents were of a superior order. He could persuade the sinner that he was miserable by nature, and then convince him that Christ was the way, the truth, the life. As I look over the audience to-day, I see those whose heads are frosted by Time's chill blast, whom Mr. Hoffman baptised years ago, those too, whose children and grand-children to-day are present to Lear of those you, aged fathers, saw, so as to bear away with them sweet memories to their own firesides.

Rev. Mr. Kroh, when on a missionary tour through the west, called upon Father Hoffman, and was with him when his spirit took its flight to the unseen world, and attended his funeral. (Mess. Oct. 15th, 1834.)

Mr. Kroh says "he ended his active and useful life in the service of the Lord. His sun set in an unclouded sky, not to be extinguished but to rise again in a purer brightness and fuller glory." Mr. Hoffman baptised 101 during his ministry here.

It was during Father Hoffman's pastorate, that the lot of ground on which the church now stands was purchased. The deed bears the date of May 29th, 1809. It was given and granted to the Reformed and Lutheran congregations by Edward Burd, forever. The said congregations are to pay to Edward Burd, or his heirs, the yearly rent of one cent forever. The deed was made jointly to Geo. Croft and Jacob Raum, who were the Trustees representing the Reformed congregation at that time, with the Trustees of the Lutheran congregation. The people worshiped in the old log church till 1811, when the Union church was built on the ground on which the Reformed church is now located.

#### REV. HENRY HABLISTON, 1824—1828.

Following Rev. J. Hoffman was Mr. Habliston, who was born in Baltimore city in 1794. He was a graduate of St. Mary's College of the same city. He studied theology with Rev. C. Becker, D. D., pastor of the Reformed Church in that city. He was sent as a missionary to Westmoreland county, Pa., in 1817, and met with partial success. After 1819 his name does not occur in the synodical minutes till 1824, when his name appears in connection with the remark, "late of York co., now of Shippensburg." At first he served three congregations in Cumberland Valley, but in 1826 only one—Shippensburg.

He was expelled from Synod in 1828, for some reason. In 1831 he was restored, but in 1837 Zion's Classis resolved not to regard him any longer as a member of that body. But Lebanon Classis restored him in 1848. He died in Baltimore, Md., April 2nd, 1870, aged 76 years.

Mr. Habliston was an eccentric man, which made his life so much checkered. Owing to the peculiar nature of his mind, and the great and serious afflictions in his family, he oft times made mistakes in his ministry. He was not without talent, neither did he do wrong intentionally. It was during his ministry that the Reformed congregation was divided. One part removed to the Main street, and, with some of the members of the Lutheran Church, founded the congregation now known as the "Bethel," but originally known as the "Union Reformed," according to the authority of Rev. Jno. Rebaugh, who was at one time pastor. Mr. Habliston is more to be pitied than to be blamed. He was a well-disposed but unfortunate brother. Previous to his pastorate the German was ex-

clusively used, but he introduced the English. His ministry closed with the year 1828.

**REV. FREDERICK A. RAHAUSER, 1828—  
1836.**

Rev. F. A. Rahauer was just the man for this place after the schism had taken place. And no doubt if it had not been for the untiring services of this good, faithful, humble, christian man, and his faithful adherents, only 34 in number, the Reformed Church would have passed away, and would have been a ruin of the past. But the spirit of the Reformation was not extinct and the Church lived. A half-dozen faithful fathers stood firm and piloted the ship through the storm. The Reformed obtained a charter jointly with the Lutherans, April, 1828. The officers of the Reformed Church were as follows:

**TRUSTEES:**

Samuel Pague, Christian Noaker and John Raum.

**ELDERS:**

Peter Hollar, John Durnbaugh and Conrad Plaster.

**DEACONS:**

Christian Noaker, Peter Pague and Jacob Steinman.

A writer in the Shippensburg *News* recently stated "with these brethren at the head of its affairs, the congregation prospered and spread a benign influence throughout the community." Mr. Rahauer served the congregation till 1836, and left it in a prosperous condition. He went West, and died in Pittsburg, July 17, 1862, aged 83 years. At his last communion here, Aug. 4, 1836, 58 commemorated the Lord's death.

Mr. Rahauer labored earnestly in the Lord's vineyard. The sweet savors of his life, and salutary effects of his labors still remain wherever he has labored as a minister of the

cross. There will be many souls, which will adorn his crown of rejoicing in the day when God shall make up his jewels. To think of him and his band of earnest workers surrounding the Great White Throne, giving Glory to the Lamb is truly enrapturing. Amongst his last words, which he uttered, were these: "I have an unswerving faith that Jesus, our Saviour, whom I have preached to others is mine." He peacefully fell asleep in Jesus.

**REV. W. C. BENNET, 1837—1838.**

When Mr. Bennet became pastor, the Shippensburg charge included the congregation at this place, Orrstown, Sharpsburg, and Keifer's church. He served as a missionary to the Carolinas previous to his coming North in 1836. There were forty-eight who communed on May 13th, 1837. With what success he labored here Eternity will reveal. He had a natural impediment in his speech, which was a hindrance in his pulpit efforts. He was not very popular either as a pastor. Yet his love for the Reformed Church was ardent. He was, truly, an earnest and sincere man. He left Shippensburg in 1838, but in 1850 he was pastor at Newburg and adjacent points. In 1854 he located at Boiling Springs, where he died April 20th, 1870, aged near 66 years. His labors on earth have ended, and he has gone to his long home.

**REV. A. H. KREMER, D. D., 1839—1845.**

The charge was vacant for near a year and a-half previous to Dr. Kremer's pastorate, during which time the people became greatly discouraged, but when he came at the conclusion of his theological course to this field, new interest was excited. I here insert a letter from him giving an account of his labors:

LANCASTER, Dec. 19th, 1876.

*"Rev. and Dear Bro.:—In answer to your inquiry I will say that I commenced my ministry in Shippensburg as a licentiate, Oct. 1, 1839, and on Nov. 7th following I was ordained by a committee of Zion's Classis, consisting of Revs. Jno. Cares, B. Schneck, D. D., and Jacob Sechler. My immediate predecessor was Rev. W. C. Benet. The congregation was so sadly run down that upon my first visit in Aug. 1839, I was told by the members that they had nearly come to a resolve to disband as a Reformed congregation, and unite with the Lutherans who worshiped in the same building. My visit, however, excited some new interest, and after spending several days with the disheartened membership, they in a month after tendered me a call to the pastorate which continued to Oct. 1, 1845, when I was succeeded by Rev. John S. Foulk. There were added to the congregation during my ministry 43 by confirmation and 4 by certificate—leaving at the close of my pastorate 41 male and 69 female members. May God greatly bless your ministry among this people, to whom my heart is tenderly drawn as the first field of my ministerial labors and trials."*

"Yours in grace,  
A. H. KREMER."

Dr. Kremer first organized the Reformed Sunday School. Pleasant memories combine into a beautiful halo which encircles the pastorate of Dr. Kremer, who was so faithful and untiring in his labors among you.

REV. JOHN S. FOULK, 1846-1851.

I do not know where Mr. Foulk resides now. He no longer stands in ecclesiastical relation with the Reformed Church. His ministry extended over a period of five years. During Mr. Foulk's pastorate the Lutherans built the church they now occupy, and in 1849 the present edifice, in which we to-day have assembled, was erected. Samuel Pague, Christian Rebuck, and Daniel Keenan were the building committee,

and William McClure, contractor.—On the fifth day of April, 1850, the Legislature granted a new charter to the Reformed congregation, which was approved by Gov. Johnston. Mr. Foulk's labors close with the year 1851, when he was succeeded by

REV. G. W. GLESSNER, 1851-1856.

When Father Glessner took charge of the congregation the members were greatly disheartened. The Sunday School had disbanded, and prayer meetings were unknown. He organized the Sunday School and held prayer meetings in the houses of the members. When he came the attendance was meagre, but soon the house was filled by anxious ones to hear the truth as Father Glessner earnestly expounded it. Oft, indeed, the audience was greatly moved by the earnest preacher's words. During his pastorate the country points were dropped, and his labors latterly were confined to Shippensburg. After serving this congregation five years and eight months, he resigned and accepted a call to Middletown, but the people were loathe to accept his resignation, and permit him to leave.

Father Glessner has labored earnestly and zealously for almost fifty years as a minister of the Gospel in the Reformed Church. But now his labors are near an end. His locks are rapidly whitening, indicative that age is making rapid inroads on his remaining strength. I know you hold him in grateful remembrance, for few ministers have been so successful. A large number of the leading divines in the Reformed Church of to-day are a part of Father Glessner's spiritual household, either by baptism or confirmation.

REV. F. A. RUPLEY, 1857-1861.

Mr. Rupley's pastorate continued from April 2, 1857, to the last of June

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1861—a period of more than three years. Mr. Rupley is an exceedingly active man, and possesses in a remarkable degree executive ability. He is an excellent financier, and such a one as is needed to pilot a congregation through financial difficulties. His preaching was characterized with earnestness, and he was favored with large audiences. He did a good work here during his short pastorate in gathering in the sheaves, in the way of additions to the church. The transactions of the consistory and congregation have been faithfully recorded by Hon. H. Ruby, Secretary of the consistory. If the records had been as faithfully kept by all the Secretaries previous, the congregation would have had on record many interesting items, from which we could on this occasion largely have drawn. Mr. Rupley's first labors were confined to Shippensburg, but when Zion's Church, near Newburg, became vacant, he supplied the people there, when finally Shippensburg and Zion's were constituted a pastoral charge.

On Jan. 2, 1858, Rev. F. A. Rupley, Henry Ruby and Jacob Nottsker, were constituted the committee to prepare the Constitution for the government of your church. The committee reported on Jan. 24, 1858, when the present Constitution was adopted. At the adopting of the Constitution Jacob Steinman occupied the chair, and Geo. Clever was Secretary. There were 124 communicants present at the last celebration of the Lord's Supper, during Mr. Rupley's ministry. From Shippensburg he went to Middletown, Md. He now resides in Martinsburg, Pa., having retired from pastoral labor, owing to failing health. You hold him in grateful remembrance, because many of you

have referred to his pastorate in terms of highest commendation.

REV. A. S. VAUGHN, 1861—1863.

Mr. Vaughn's pastorate was a short one. It was during war times, too, when every one in this community was greatly excited over the probable issue of the Rebellion. Mr. Vaughn, himself, particularly felt the stress of circumstances produced by war. Owing to these he left his home in North Carolina for Pennsylvania in 1861. Mr. Vaughn is certainly a fine scholar and an excellent preacher. Whilst amongst you he was, I believe, engaged in teaching, which so occupied his time that he was prevented from pastoral visitation. He took a decided stand in defense of the old customs of the Reformed Church. He resigned April 19, 1863. He has since returned to North Carolina, and is engaged in teaching—his favorite profession. He is connected with the Presbyterian Church South at present.

REV. JACOB HASSSLER, 1863—1869.

Mr. Hassler's pastorate extended over a period of five years and nine months. He added a number of persons to the church in the early part of his ministry. He was pastor during a very exciting period of the civil war. I have been told that he was especially interested in the young. This is truly a commendable trait of his. Too many pastors permit the young unwarned, to wander through the wilderness of sin. He preached regularly at Shippensburg and Zion's Church. He reports the Shippensburg congregation as numbering 190 members when he resigned this charge. Mr. Hassler is friendly and social almost to a fault. He now resides at Mercersburg, Pa., and is Principal of a Classical School for young ladies.

REV. A. G. DOLE, 1870 -1872.

Whilst pastor of St. John's Church, in West Philadelphia, Mr. Dole received and accepted a call to become your pastor. His pastorate was a brief one extending over only two years. During this period 21 were added to the church. In 1872, a call was extended him by the consistory of the Huntingdon charge, which he accepted. There are recorded "Resolutions of Respect," showing that he must have been much beloved. He is a kind man, and is ever anxious for the salvation of all. His voice is always uttered in favor of peace. Judging from his delicate appearance, time is telling upon him. At present he resides at Huntingdon, and last Spring was chosen President of Mercersburg Classis.

REV. S. B. SCHAEFFER.

This brother's pastorate was of short duration, extending over a period of only a year and a half. He received a call to become your pastor whilst a student in the Theological Seminary at Lancaster. He entered upon his labors amongst you in the summer of 1874, and continued your pastor till the last of the year 1875. He reports in his last classical report the membership of this church as numbering 125 persons. During his pastorate Zion's and Shippensburg were each constituted into a pastoral charge. He baptized fourteen, confirmed five, and received by certificate five. Let it suffice to state that his pastorate can hardly be known as a successful one. He now resides in Carlisle, Pa., but has been recently installed pastor of the Sulpher Springs charge, in Cumberland Co., Pa.

The present pastor came Aug. 10th, 1876. What his success or failure may

be another shall record. When he came you were greatly discouraged, but he is glad he can truthfully state to-day that the future is bright, and that you as a people are rallying around the Cross, making ready for to act on the aggressive in the spiritual warfare of life. Let us all pray the Father of Mercies, for the sake of Jesus Christ, His Son, to bind us closely together, that we may labor in the vineyard of the Lord harmoniously. Each day in your prayers remember him before God's throne, and if you ask in faith your prayers will be graciously answered by Him from whom all blessings flow. He is young and comparatively inexperienced, and if he does sometimes falter, look upon him kindly so that his usefulness be not impaired.

This charge has not many representatives in the ministry. Rev. Samuel Helfenstein, D. D., was a member of this charge while a theological student under Rev. J. P. Stock previous to the year 1800. Rev. Matthew Irvin was also a member of this charge, and studied under Dr. Kremer during his pastorate. Rev. M. Irvin baptized your present pastor. Both Dr. Helfenstein and Rev. Irvin have been called to their Fathers, but not until they had been permitted to serve their Master faithfully here on earth. Rev. Conrad Clever is the only son of the Shippensburg Reformed congregation in the ministry, and is laboring actively and successfully at Columbia, Pa. May he be but the first of those who will enter the ministerial ranks from this congregation, and ere another century has passed may a score be standing on the "watch towers" of Zion proclaiming salvation through the Crucified Redeemer.

But we are all happy now, because

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we have done honor to those gone before, by calling them to memory. But one of the twenty pastors placed over this congregation has proved a reprobate, and that one is the wretched Spangenberg.

Your ancestors, your fore-fathers in the church, my friends, labored diligently to establish the Reformed Church in Shippensburg. They have bequeathed their labors to you, and their prayer, no doubt, was that the rising generations should be equally diligent. Now amidst the reminiscences of near a century and a quarter, can you for a moment think of forsaking the Church of your Fathers, and thus betray your trust? No! I know you will not. Yea, I believe, that amidst the memories of this day, you will resolve to stand by the old Reformed faith. Now it will not suffice to rely upon the history of the past alone, thinking that the history of your congregation will keep you alive; but whilst you call to mind the trials and triumphs of those of old, you must not forget to labor for an increase of faith and numbers. May each inquire:

"What shall I render to my God,  
"For all his kindness shown?"

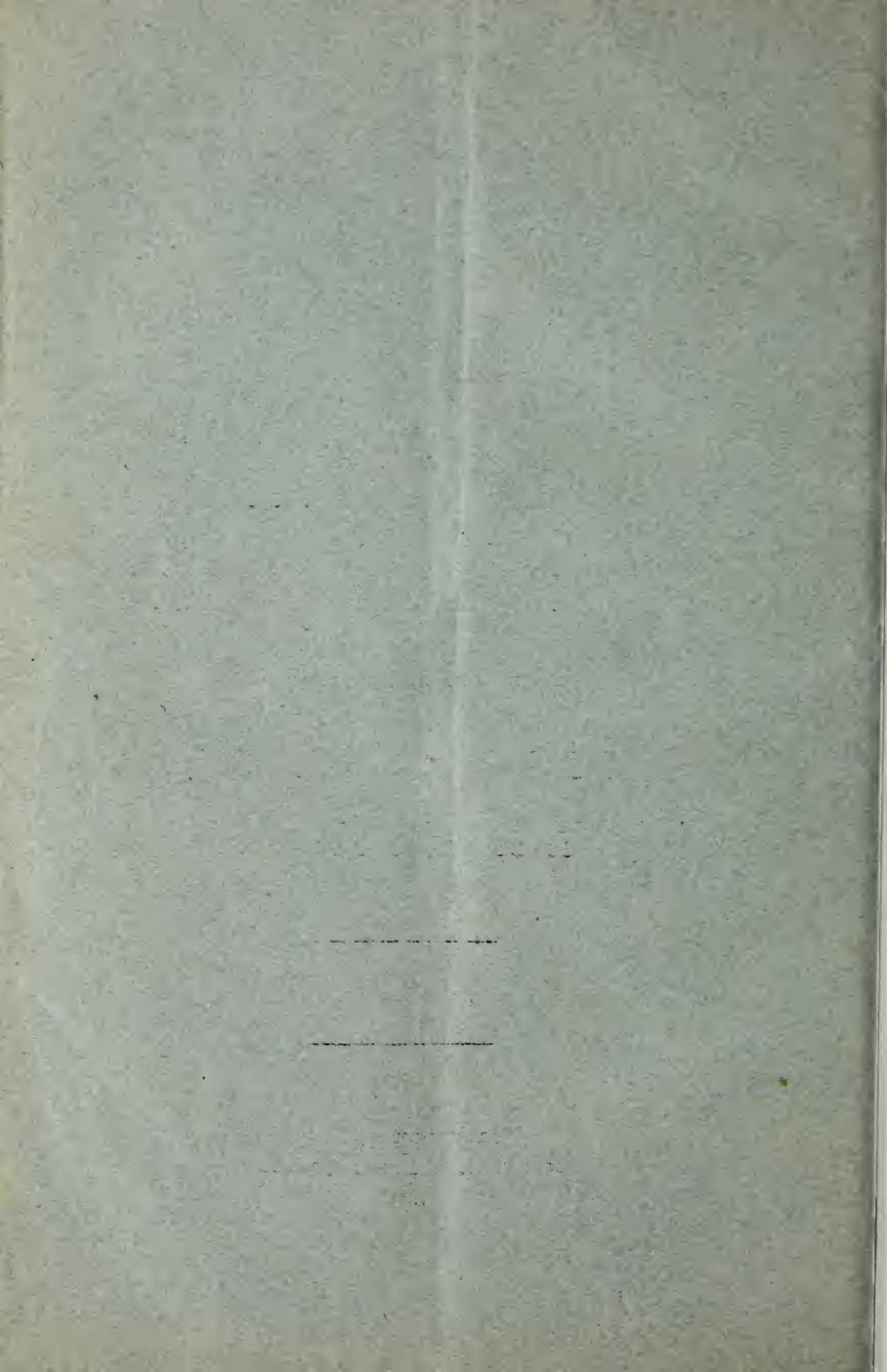
And may the answer be:

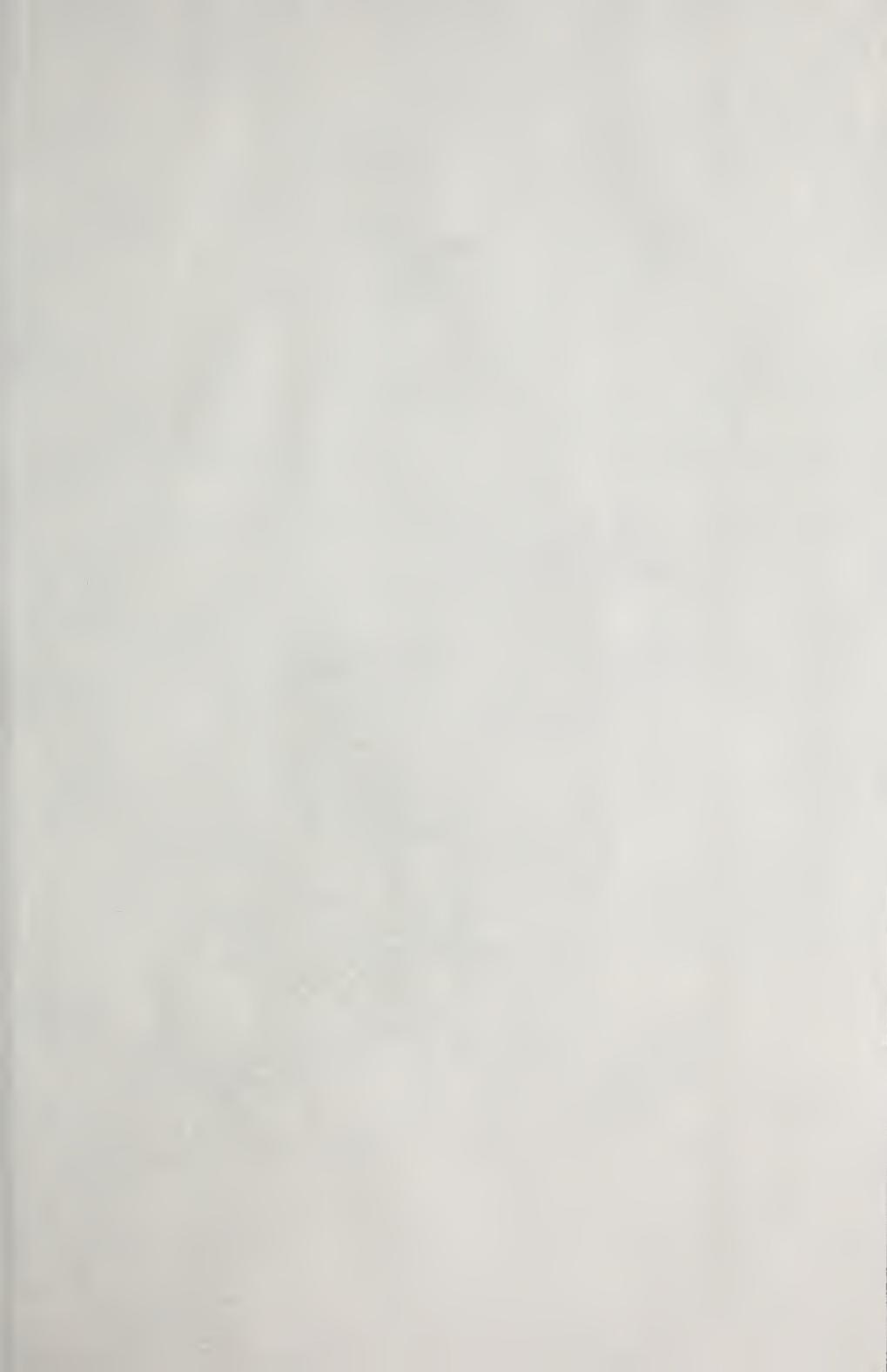
"My feet shall visit thine abode,  
"My songs address thy throne.  
"Among the saints that fill thine house,  
"My offerings shall be paid;  
"There shall my zeal perform the vows  
"My soul in anguish made.  
"Here in thy courts I leave my vow,  
"And thy rich grace record;  
"Now to His praise I'll spend my breath,  
"And my remaining days."

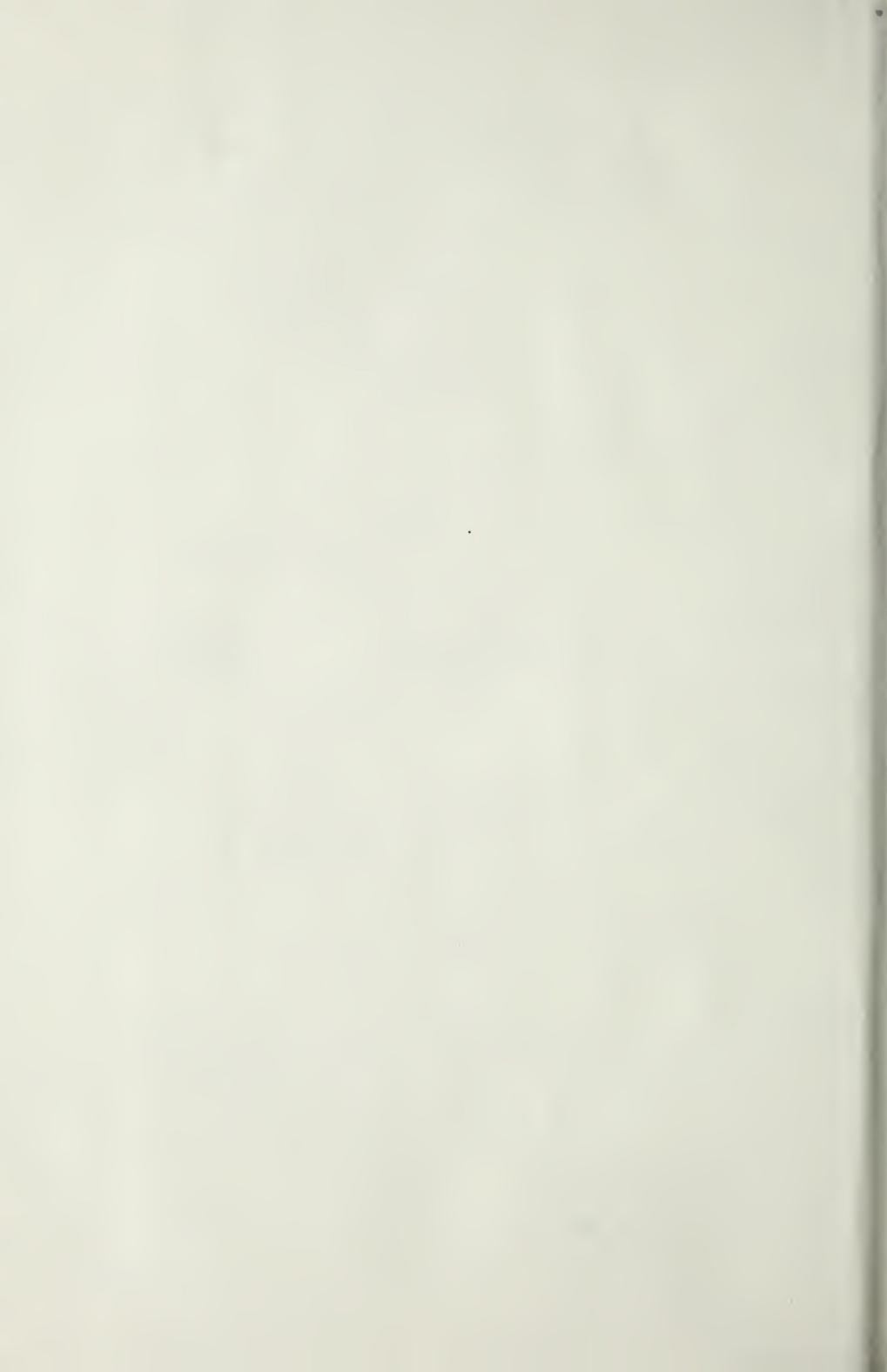
Look behind you! The fathers of the past who gladly sought the house of God, by wending their way thro' the wilderness, rise in memory to beckon you to move onward, having the glory of God as your guiding star. Look around you! Behold the harvest

is ripe, ready for the sickle, which you and I are called upon to wield, so that glorious sheaves may be garnered in the Church of Christ. Look before you! Behold a starry crown, and pure white robes for each of you, who will be faithful till He comes to summon you to appear before Him, and enjoy the company of the venerable fathers who have already passed through the valley and shadow of death. So when trials do come—and they will come—do not break ranks, but as a mighty phalanx with your shields of faith protecting you from the Enemy's darts, go forward manfully conquering Satan who is at work all around you.

Aye! There is another strong incentive to urge us onward. To think of those faithful ones who have entered into the joy of their Lord, from 1753 to 1877, standing on the portals of Paradise to welcome the faithful in the name of Jesus. There will be many, as the many mounds around us indicate. You who are bound to them by tender ties of relationship, together with us who are joined together as followers of the same Lord, will be truly happy then. But this future felicity is conditioned. No one can himself build a dwelling unless he work, nor can one be a faithful servant of the Lord unless he labor for the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom. If you feel like giving up the Christian race remember if you do, a crown of righteousness will never grace your forehead, nor will you ever walk the streets of the New Jerusalem. With these incentives to labor, I believe each with me will heartily join in these words: *If I forget thee, O Church of my Fathers, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.*







**2/3/2012**

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